



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY
Aims to Remove 10,000+ Tons of Particulates from State's Air

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano today signed into law Arizona's first major air quality legislation in a decade. The new law, which takes effect in September, strengthens current air quality regulations and establishes new measures to improve air quality and protect public health in Arizona.

"Clean air is not just a matter of making the sky more blue," Governor Napolitano said. "Our air quality has a big effect on the health and well-being of Arizonans. This legislation is an important step forward in cleaning up air pollution in our state."

Under the newly signed SB 1552, sponsored by Senator Carolyn Allen and Representative Ray Barnes, an estimated 10,425 tons of particulate matter will be removed from the air Arizonans breathe.

Among the provisions included, more than 150 miles of dirt roads and shoulders will be paved or stabilized in Maricopa County, restrictions on leaf blowers and agricultural facilities will be tightened, and an on-site dust coordinator will be required at all Maricopa County construction sites that are five acres or larger.

Arizona is under a federally imposed deadline of December 31, 2007 to demonstrate to the federal Environmental Protection Agency how it will achieve reductions of more than 4,000 tons of particulate air pollution per year until Arizona meets federal health-based standards.

The new law will also help reduce ozone levels in the Phoenix metropolitan area. The law requires that cleaner-burning gasoline be sold in a portion of Pinal County during summer months; prohibits open burning in parts of Maricopa County during the summer; and begins a test phase for a vehicle emissions inspection program that will identify liquid leaks in vehicles, which can create ozone. The Phoenix metropolitan area currently does not meet the federal health standards for long-term exposure to ozone, and faces a June 2009 deadline to do so.

The new bill will help Arizona avoid the possible loss of federal funding if it does not comply with the regulations. "Arizonans will have healthier air to breathe as a result of this bill, the Governor said. "This is a critical step in protecting our federal highway funds."

For more information about the Office of the Governor, please visit www.azgovernor.gov.